



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

an settler exposed to savage incursions, and every variety of affecting vicissitude; but let us hasten to acquaint ourselves with the earlier native. Let us hasten;—for already has the cultivator levelled many a monumental mound, that spoke of more than writings might preserve. Already are the lands cleared of their heaven-planted forests, once hallowed by the visits of the Wakou bird, before she ascended into other regions, indignant at the approach of a race, who knew not the worship of nature. Already are the hills surmounted, and the rocks violated by the iron hammer, which the Indian regarded with distant awe, as the barriers of his ‘humble heaven.’—And why should not these vast and magnificent regions have been the haunts of majestic spirits, such as imbodyed themselves with mist, and shaped them from the clouds, so as to be seen of heroes and bards of other days? Our tall, dense forests are fitter for the mysterious abodes of the shadowy powers, and our hills lead farther into the sky;—our mountains present a firmer pathway through the clouds, for the descent of the rushing hosts that deign a concern for the affairs of mortals. In every place, wherever we rest or walk, we may feel, in fancy, the animating spirit, declared by ancient philosophers and poets to pervade the stupendous frame of nature;—we may feel its life-breathing motions, perceive its immortal complacency in the gleamings which break from out the hill-side and the plain; and listen to its supernatural promptings.

*On the Health of Literary Men.*

THE moral influences of literary occupation have been frequent subjects of speculation,—it may be interesting to examine its effects on bodily health; especially, as the instances of early decay and death are so frequent among our men of letters. Is there any thing in our institutions or habits, which may have a share in the production of these melancholy effects?

The mind, during the whole of life, has an influence over the body. Its power in some instances is so great, as to subvert long established habits,—to destroy that equilibrium of action in which health consists, and indirectly induce disease. It is reasonable to suppose that this influence will

derange that system the least, which has acquired the most perfect development or growth ; and that hence prematurity of mind, acting upon the highly susceptible system of youth, may be among the causes of the feeble and short life, by which we often find it to be succeeded. The early education, therefore, of literary men, or those destined for the professions, should be taken into the account, when we speculate on the probable causes of their diseases ;—and it may be safely inferred, that that system of education will be found most favourable to health, which is calculated to retard premature intellectual development, and which at the same time produces a less violent but more healthful mental excitement. This consideration, however, has but a small place in our systems of education, which appear to be essentially systems of intellectual forcing. The time devoted to primary education, whether for colleges or professions, is very short, and yet much is to be done,—a considerable portion of elementary learning is then to be acquired. During this period, important changes in the physical condition are to take place, and it can hardly happen, but that they shall be in some degree affected by the circumstances under which they occur. These changes consist in that gradual development of structure and form, which constitutes growth ;—and the effects of external and internal circumstances are discoverable in the susceptibilities which particular organs or the whole system may receive.

Now, in what situation or under what circumstances, may this development most favourably take place, especially in those who are destined to the professions or to literary occupation ? Perhaps a more favourable combination of circumstances cannot be found, than in a school and its discipline. There the mind seems to exert something like a mechanical influence over the body, or the influences of mind and body are so perfectly reciprocal, that it would be hardly possible to say, which exerted the most power. A boy at school studies, because he is to find his reward in healthful amusement abroad, and in the affectionate regards of his superiour. He has only to dread the infliction of corporal punishment, or censure, if he fail to accomplish his prescribed task. He has something specific and tangible in view in his labours, something which must be done ; and though they

may be fatiguing, he knows that the will of his instructor, or certainly the decline of the sun, will bring them to an end.

While this salutary discipline directs his mind, a no less salutary one influences his body. The hour that closes his intellectual labour is a period of perfect intermission. It is filled with activity, and fatigue is lost in amusement. His diet is simple and regular, and excess is checked by the wholesome restraints of home. Here, certainly, is a combination of circumstances admirably adapted to preserve the sound mind in the sound body.

Unfortunately, in this country, this discipline is but of short continuance;—from school, the boy is early removed to the university. What is the difference between the two situations?—and what is there in the discipline of the university, unfavourable to health at this early age? The boy is at once submitted to entirely new and very powerful influences. He is no longer to be rewarded by play or punished by seclusion. His reward is now to be found exclusively in intellectual distinction, and his punishment in a declared and conscious inferiority. He is at once brought under the influence of the strongest passions and sentiments which can find a place in his heart,—he is perpetually vibrating between a too elevated excitement, and debilitating depression. His habits are violently broken—the restraints of home and of school are abandoned, and the willing dependence of boyhood is made to give place to entire self-direction. We have here some of the causes, which tend to disturb or destroy that equable action, which should always exist in a system whose parts are only forming, and every organ of which may receive healthy or morbid susceptibilities, according to the influences which act upon them. It is unnecessary to shew the particular affections, which may be produced by these causes, or the order in which they occur. The general effect, however, is feeble life, or at least a predisposition to some of the most formidable maladies to which the body is liable.

The circumstances of our scholars, after the course of their education is completed, present some obstacles to the formation and preservation of regular habits. We rarely cultivate literature professionally;—nearly all our men of letters are also men of active business, subject at once to the opposite influences and demands of an active and sedentary life. And he who carries the fatigues of study into the world, and those

of business into his closet, with a mind long upon the stretch and directed to a variety of objects, with little command of his hours, choice of amusements, or restraint upon his ambition, will soon feel the necessity and lament the difficulty of establishing any thing like system in his labours or relaxation. His pursuits are indeed various, but change is not remission. The hours he takes from his profession must not only be repaid, but they are given to other toil, though of another kind. He feels too, that his active labours are very far from answering the purpose of free, careless exercise in the open air, and that study is not rest. The excitement of the day ceases not, perhaps, at its close; and he who may have only half lost his consciousness at night, whose powers may have only been confused and troubled by sleep, must yet see the sun and his labours dawn upon him together.

Our scholars are with us in our social and convivial amusements, and here they are in danger of conforming to the world in dissipation, that may be harmless to the merely active or to the fashionable, but which offers violence to those habits of a scholar, which are most essential to a clear, tranquil mind, and a perfect command of its powers. To be wholly independent of society will not do. It has claims and uses which no man should despise. There are affections to be cherished and expanded, and courtesies of life to be observed;—and no plans should be formed without a regard to them, or with which they may not innocently interfere. Besides, the scholar should be much in society for its excitement, for the diversion it gives to his thoughts. He should surrender himself sometimes to the influence of other minds. He must relax his strained powers, be gay and even vacant, if he would remove the feverishness, the depression and restlessness, which so often visit him after long and intense study. But it is also necessary that every class of men should have habits suited to their occupations,—habits of pleasure as well as of work; and besides the difficulty of establishing these, which arises from the variety and irregularity of their pursuits, our scholars are too few to form a separate class, with distinct manners and an appropriate mode of life, and therefore are apt to accommodate themselves in these respects, where imitation is more natural than in almost any other, to the mass among whom their lot is cast. And nothing can be more fatal to that composure of the faculties and tranquillity

of the circulations, which are so essential to the health of a student, than the irregular hours, the innocent dissipation, the parties, dinners, and suppers to which he is continually exposed and solicited. Regularity is the first of his wants, and the habit of avoiding all strong excitement should be the first of his cautions; and if he fails in neither of these, health will almost surely follow.

It is not desirable, indeed, that our scholars should have all the influence in polished society, which the philosophers of France enjoyed, who governed in the drawing-room as well as in the Academy. And yet, when we know that, for the last century, the average of the life of a man of letters in France has been stated at something over sixty years,* and that the ages of twelve of her laborious philosophers, taken at random, amount to a thousand years, one cannot help ascribing this in part to their independent mode of life, and wishing that our own scholars would feel it a right and a duty to prescribe their indulgences as well as their labours. If they must attend to active business for support, and to letters for amusement only or distinction, society,—if it can value their services and influence,—will not judge them harshly, when they neglect its pleasures or enjoy them temperately, or even when they withdraw for a time from their duties. The scholar is the best judge in his own case;—the season and limits of exertion, repose, exercise and dissipation should be determined by his own sensations, his consciousness

* The same has been stated of Italy.—We also hear often of the long lives of the German students, of their vivacity in advanced years, and even that the oldest are the most efficient and useful;—and this, in spite of intense study, little exercise, and an almost intemperate use of tobacco. But it is hardly safe to attempt an explanation of the difference in these respects, between them and our own scholars, (allowing that there is one,) by pointing out a few circumstances, in which the modes of living, here and there, are opposed. The instances of early decay among our literary men, are, I believe, much more frequent than among those of foreign countries;—certainly, they are enough to deserve serious inquiry into the cause. If we should discover circumstances in the lives of our students, that will account for the evil, our conviction might be strengthened by finding that they did not exist among the healthier students of another nation;—and yet we are to remember, that the habits, which are harmless in one country, may be hurtful and even fatal in another, and that excess in labour or indulgence, will be less injurious every where, if one's mode of life is thoroughly systematical. Something important would be gained from the inquiry, if we should find (what I believe to be the case) that the situation of foreign students is more favourable than that of our own, to maintaining regular habits, suited to their occupations and duties.

of strength or debility. He is not to put off the care of his health, till decay creeps over him, till his flesh is wasted, and customary toil becomes a burden; till the signs of exhaustion are seen from abroad, and a hint is given him that he is weakened or diseased. He knows when his body fails, and his delayed and protracted studies are irksome. He alone knows or can know, when his habitual and favourite toil becomes as it were a stranger, and is put by as an unwelcome one.



Character of Sir Thomas More, by Erasmus.

[We have translated for the amusement of our readers, a part of a letter of Erasmus, giving an account of Sir Thomas More. Erasmus, it is generally known, was his contemporary, and, when he went to England, was patronised both by More and by his master, that 'excellent king' Henry VIII. Great intimacy subsisted between them, and there were many points of resemblance in their characters to conciliate mutual esteem. They were both men of an amiable disposition, a ready and playful wit, elegant scholars, and, in enlargement of mind and liberality of sentiment, much before the age in which they lived.

This letter is curious for the manner in which it speaks of the profession of the law, and also for the view it gives of the character of Henry VIII, which accords with the observation of Hume, that Henry, in the beginning of his reign, 'even in the eyes of men of sense, gave promising hopes of his future conduct.' At the time this letter was written, he had been on the throne ten years and was twenty eight years old. How different must have been the language of Erasmus, when he learned that this same Henry, whom he so highly extols, had caused his friend, the amiable, the humorous, the eloquent and virtuous More, to be beheaded:—beheaded, because he had too much honesty and firmness to acknowledge Henry to be the supreme head of the church, against the dictates of his conscience. Erasmus, at least, might with consistency complain of his friend's untimely end. His principles and feelings inclined him to the side of toleration. It gives us pain to think that the mild temper of More could be so much exasperated by the spirit of the times, as to make him participate in acts of persecution which must have told him, when his turn came, to suffer and be silent.

We trust none of our readers will be disposed to find fault with the trifling nature of some of the circumstances selected by Erasmus in his description. Trifling as they appear in themselves, the character